



9 of 9

frank MILLER

HELL and BACK

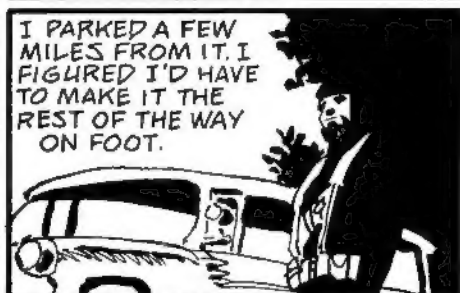
A **SIN CITY** love story

WHERE
DO YOU
THINK
YOU'RE
GOING?

JUST
WORKING
MY WAY UP
THE **FOOD**
CHAIN, MA'AM.
STAND
ASIDE.

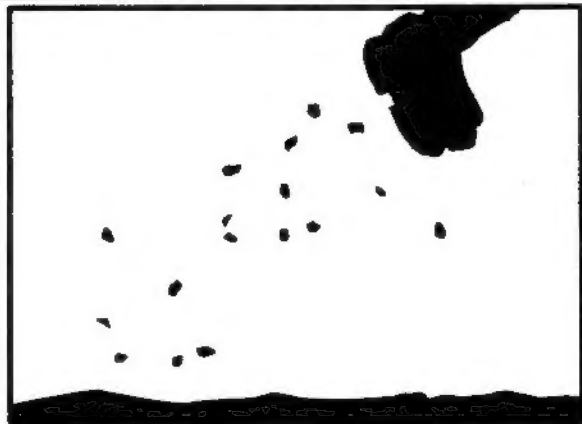
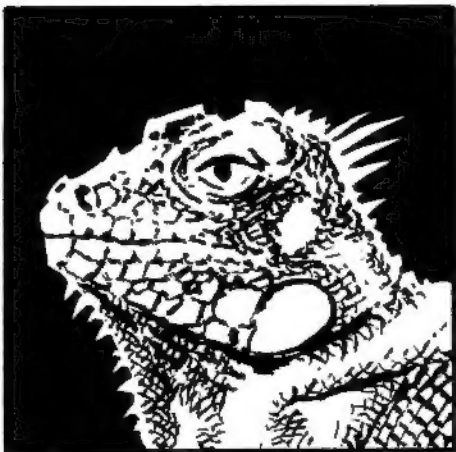
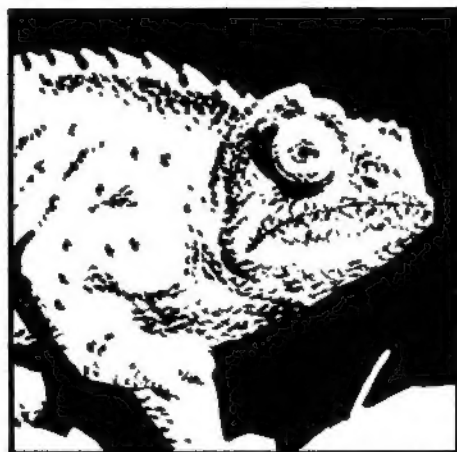




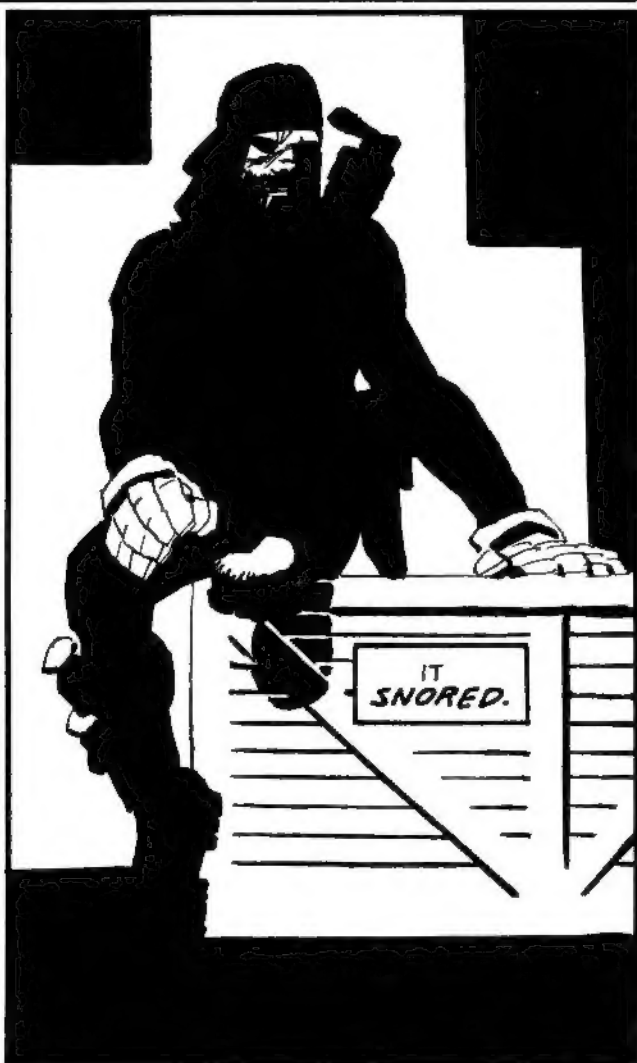
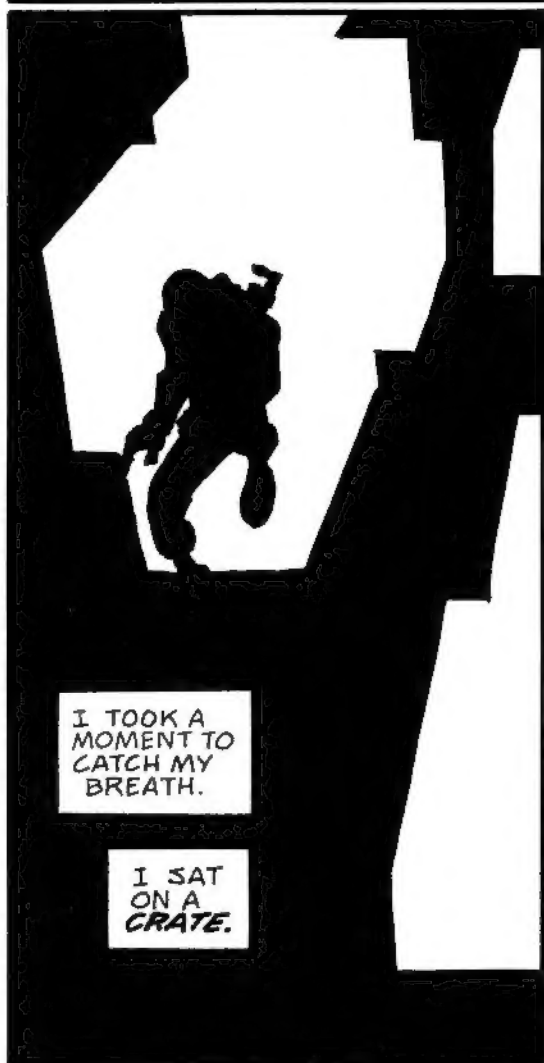




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cover colors **lynn VARLEY**
editor diana **SCHUTZ**
designer cary **GRAZZINI**
publisher mike **RICHARDSON**







OHO! IT SNORED,
DID IT? AND WHAT WAS
INSIDE IT? MAYBE A
COUPLE DOZEN PINK
ELEPHANTS TAKING
A SNOOZE?

QUIET.
SOMEONE'S
COMING.

STUCK

OH--HI, DAD!
YOU'RE UP LATE!
MOM TOLD YOU
I CALLED,
DIDN'T SHE?

SURE
SHE DID,
HANNAH.
DID YOU
HAVE A
GOOD
TIME?

IT WAS GREAT! I
WENT TO THE HOS-
PITAL TO SAY HI TO
JOSH AND I RAN
INTO JENNA AND
BURTON AND
SAM!

AND WE
WENT AND
SAW THE
NEW JANE
AUSTEN
AND IT
WAS
GREAT!

SMEK

THAT'S
NICE, SWEETIE.
OFF TO BED
WITH YOU
NOW.

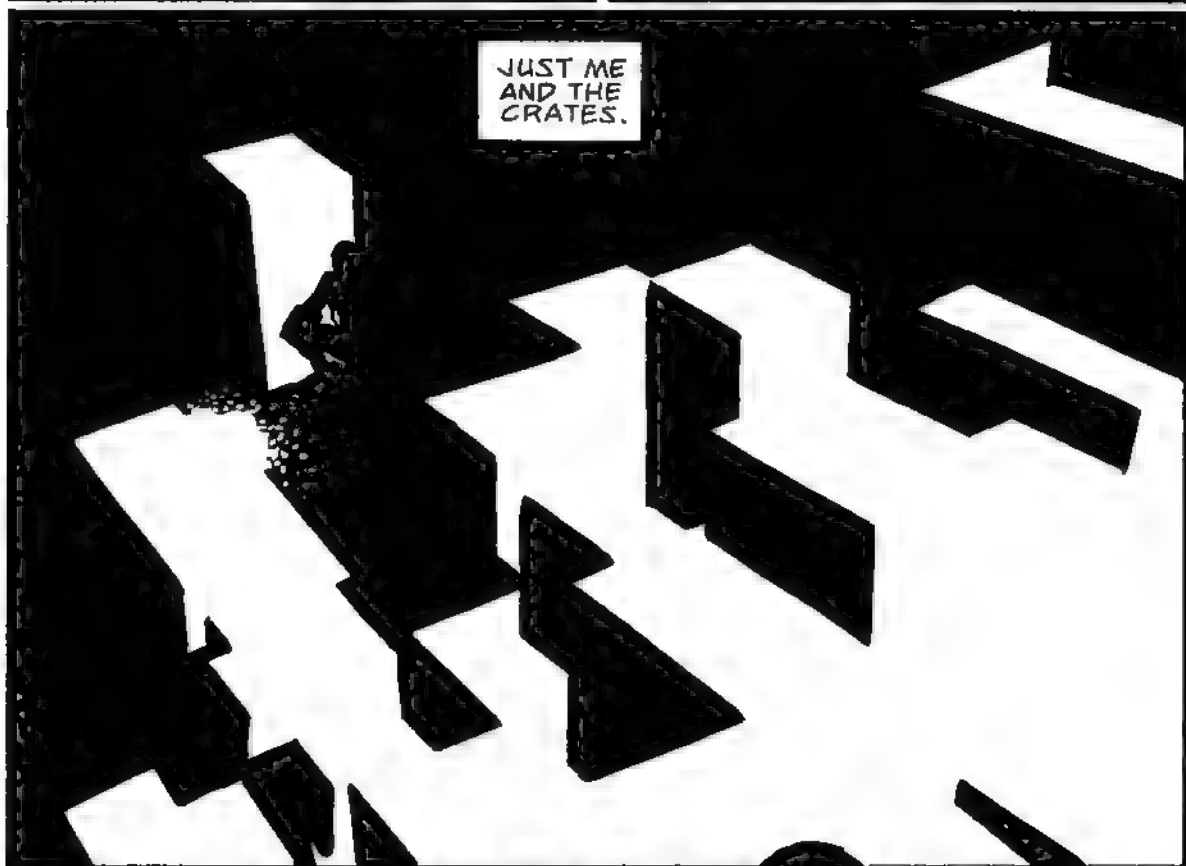
SLEEP TIGHT,
PRECIOUS.



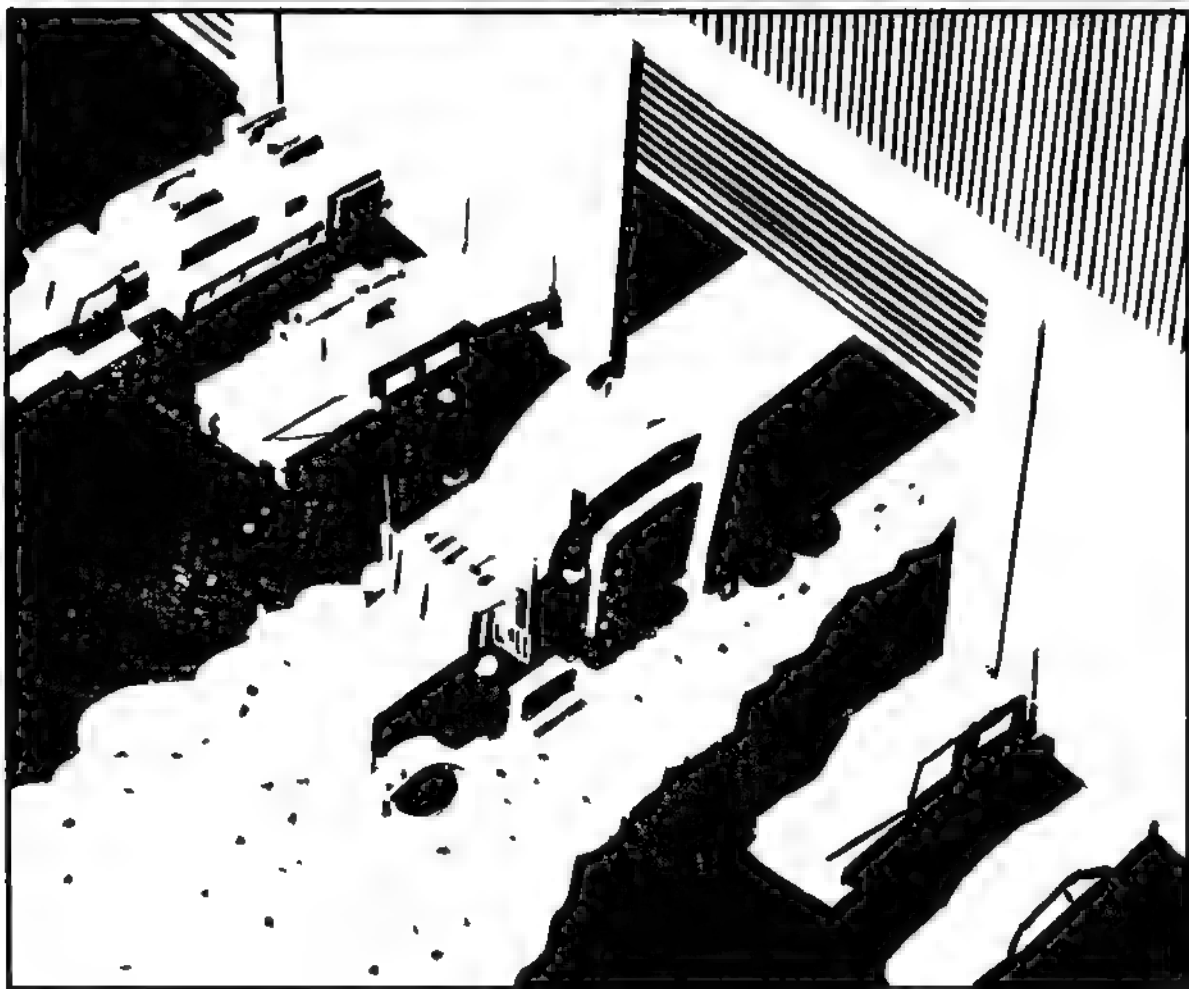
IT WAS JUST ME
AND A HEAP OF
CRATES, AND ONE
OF THE **CRATES**
WAS **SNORING**.

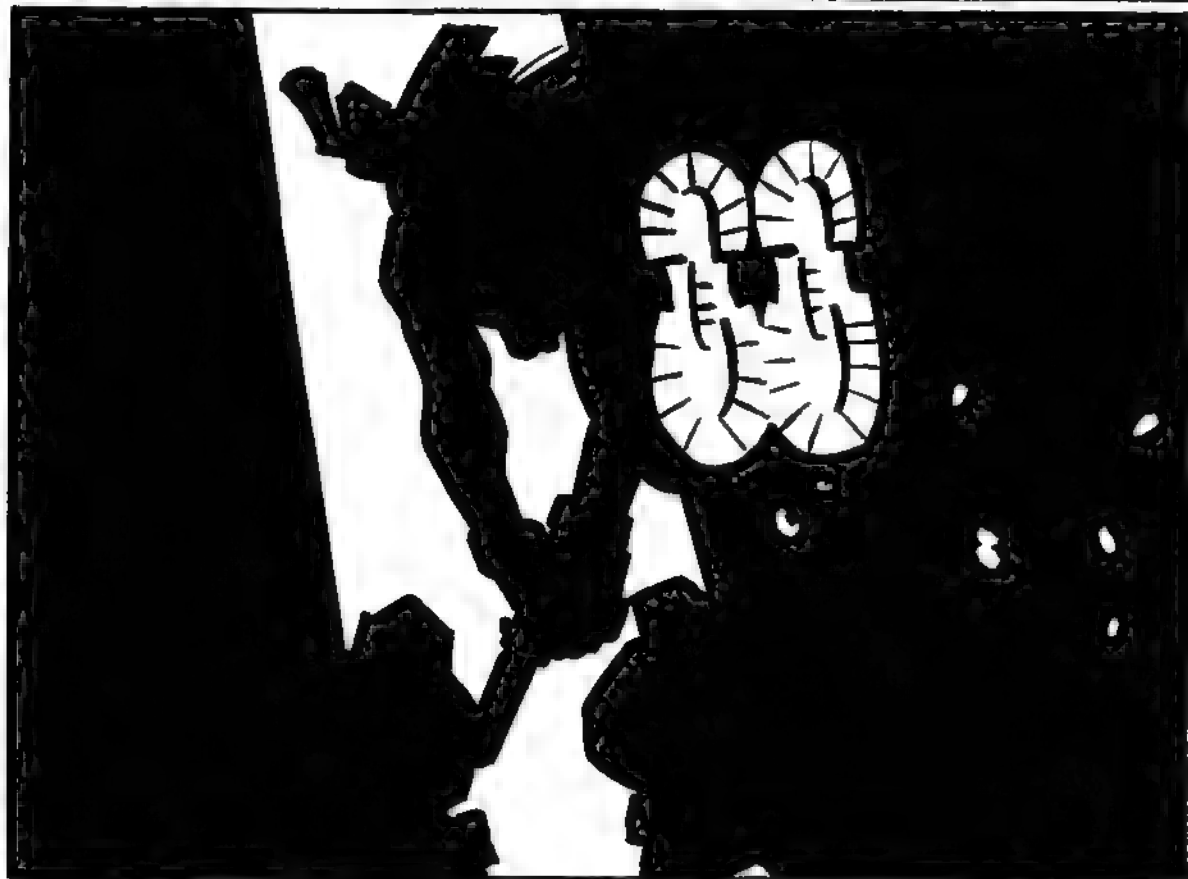
I GOT
CURIOUS.





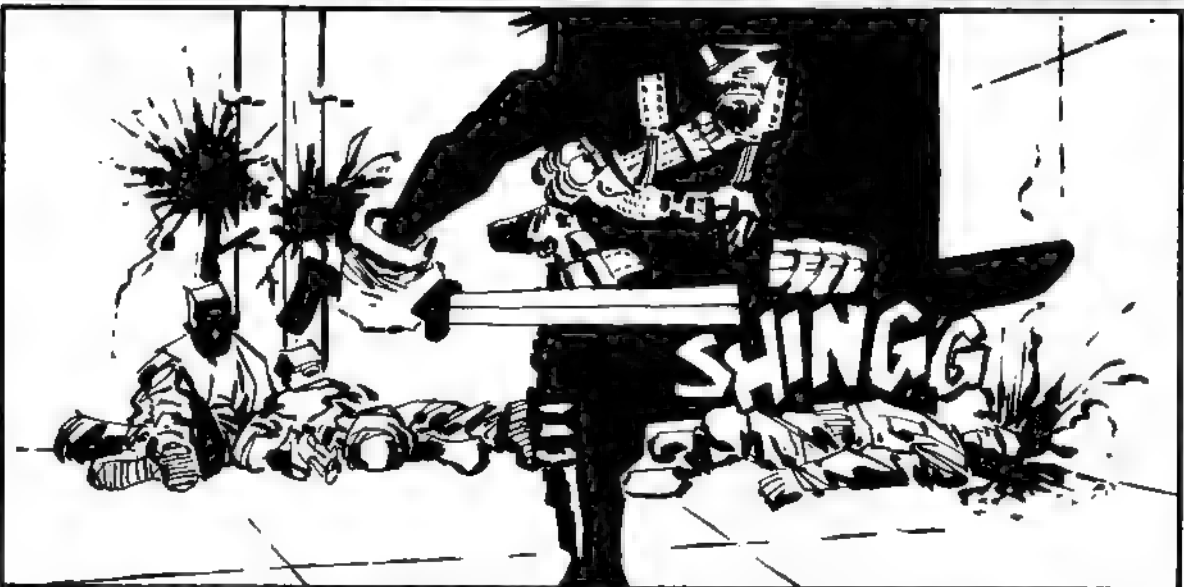


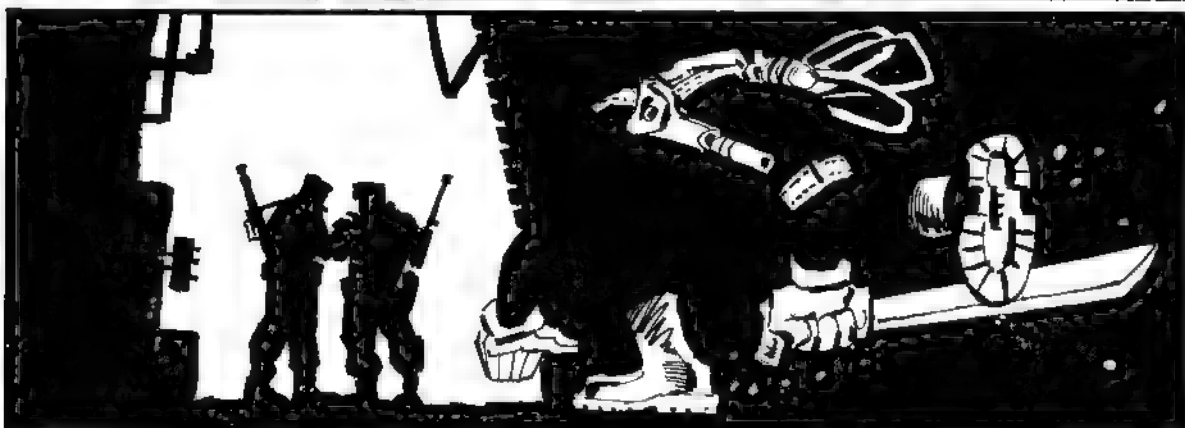














CHAK CHAK



I MADE MY
WAY ACROSS
THE YARD.

I SPOTTED
A **TANKER.**
LOADED
WITH GAS.

HIGHLY
FLAMMABLE.

SNAP

BOOP

THAP

I LEFT A
LITTLE
**SOME-
THING**
ON ITS
BELLY.

JUST IN
CASE.

I SCOPED
OUT THE MAIN
BUILDING.

THE ROOF
LOOKED
LIKE MY
BEST BET.



THERE
WAS ONE
GUARD.

HE WAS
PRETTY
QUICK.



HE ALMOST
GOT A
SHOT OFF.





I GOTTA HAND
IT TO YOU, KID. YOU
KNOW *EXACTLY*
HOW TO TALK TO
A *COP*.

SO FAR, WE'VE
GOT YOU DOWN FOR
*TRESPASSING, BREAK-
ING AND ENTERING,
MULTIPLE ASSAULTS
WITH DEADLY
WEAPONS--*

--AND I
GOT ME A
LITTLE *HUNCH*
THAT *BERETTA*
OF YOURS ISN'T
*REGIS-
TERED--*

--THROW IN A
HEAPIN' *HELPIN'* OF
MURDERS AND
YOU'VE *REALLY*
GOT ME GOING!

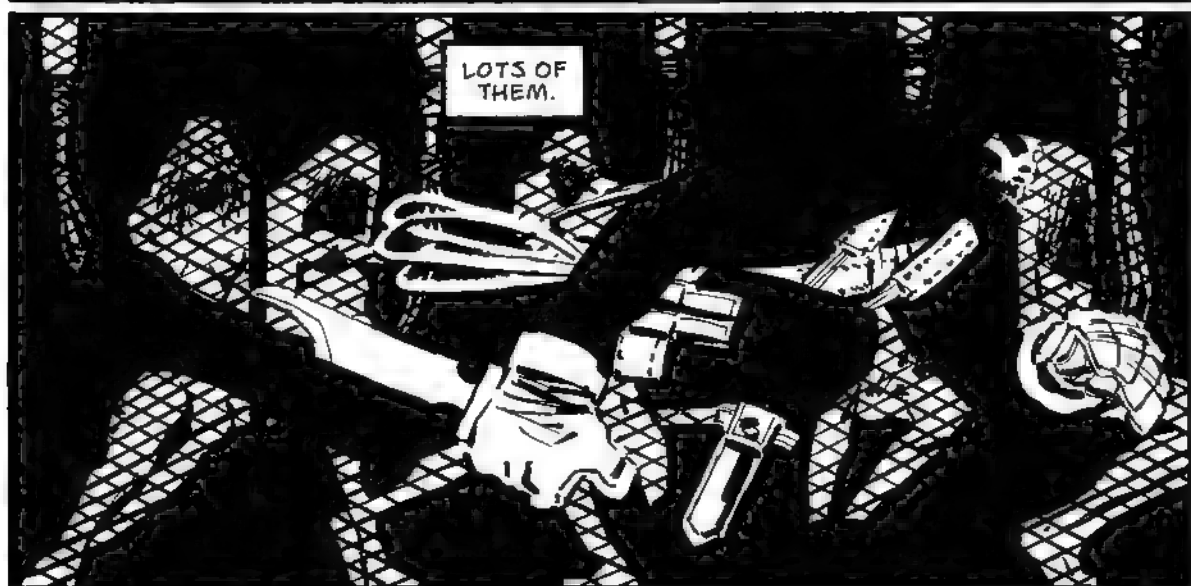


DON'T STOP
NOW. WHAT WAS
NEXT? YOU RUN
INTO *SCHULLY*
AND *MULDER*?

NO. A
NURSE--

--AND A
NURSERY.





NO SIGN
OF ESTHER.



A FEW MORE
CORRIDORS. A
STAIRWELL.
SIX MORE
GUARDS.

AN
OPERATING
ROOM. A
MORGUE.

EURPP.

YOU'RE
LOSING ME.
I'M NOT BIG
ON *HAIKU*.

HOW ABOUT
YOU THROW IN
A *VERB* OR
TWO, HUH?



I'LL GIVE YOU
VERBS. HERE'S
ONE:

STOP.

STOP
WHAT? I
DON'T GET
YOU.





I HEADED FOR THE
CENTER OF THE
COMPLEX. I MET
SOME RESISTANCE

SOMETIME
AROUND THEN,
SOMEBODY IN
CHARGE MUST
HAVE PICKED
ME UP ON A
SURVEILLANCE
CAMERA.

CONSIDERING
WHAT CAME
LATER.

RUTHLESS.

ABSOLUTELY
RUTHLESS.

I BROKE INTO A
COLD PLACE. A
MORGUE.

THE FIRST
DRAWER I
OPENED WAS
EMPTY.

THE SECOND ONE
HAD A *MAN* IN IT,
MAYBE TWENTY
YEARS OLD. HE
WAS IN PRETTY
GOOD SHAPE--

--EXCEPT THAT HIS
HEART AND LUNGS
AND LIVER HAD
BEEN **SURGICALLY
REMOVED.**

WHADDAYAMEAN,
"SURGICALLY
REMOVED"?

JUST THAT.
**SURGICALLY
REMOVED.
HARVESTED.**

THERE'S
QUITE A
MARKET OUT
THERE FOR
**LIVE
ORGANS.**

AND FOR
YOUNG WOMEN.
AND FOR YOUNG
BOYS.

AND FOR
BABIES.





HELL.

THE HEART
OF DARKNESS.

HELL--ALL
DECKED
OUT LIKE A
MOVIE
SET.

CHLORINE
BURNED MY
NOSTRILS.



THEY KEPT THE
PLACE CLEAN.

SPOTLESS.



THE PROPS
TOLD ME
WHAT THEY
FILMED.



THE PROPS--
AND THE
COSTUMES.



CARE TO MAKE
A MOVIE WITH
ME, HANDSOME?





COME
ON OVER
WE'LL HAVE
US A
TIME.

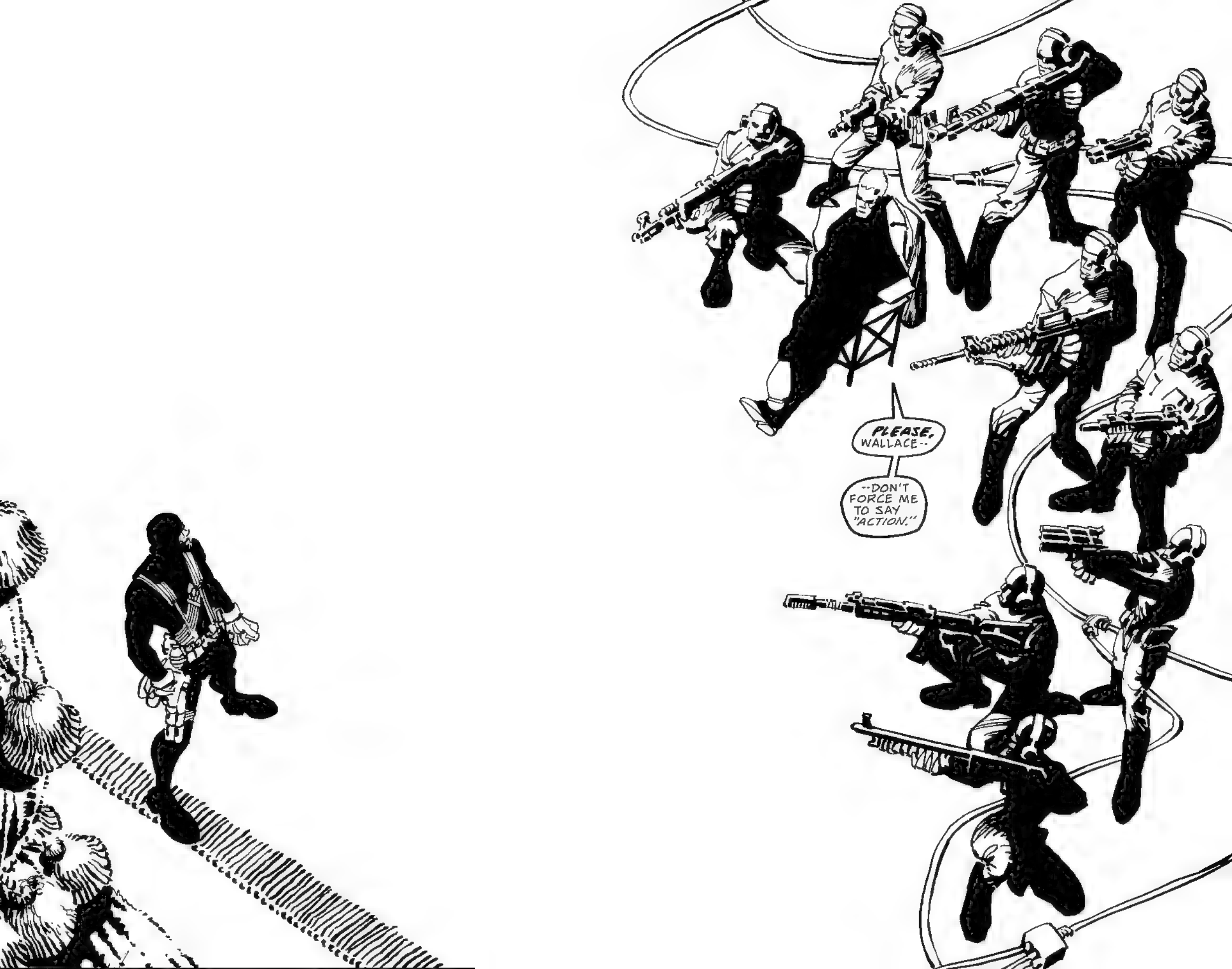
IT'S A NICE
BED. THEY CHANGE
THE SHEETS
EVERY DAY.

SAME
WITH THE
MATTRESS.



THE CAMERAS ARE
ALL SET, AND THE
CREW IS RARING
TO GO.

LIGHTS!



WHERE IS SHE?
WHERE'S **ESTHER?**



WHO CARES? SHE'S
NOBODY. NO FAMILY, NO FRIENDS,
NO CAREER TO
SPEAK OF. A WASTE
OF **HUMAN**
RESOURCES.



SHE HAS A FRIEND
WHERE IS SHE?



SHE'S GOING TO A
FARAWAY LAND, TO
BECOME THE BRIDE
OF A VERY RICH
MAN.



THE HELL SHE
WILL



AND, AFTER A
PERIOD OF **CON-**
DITIONING,
YOU'RE GOING
TO WORK FOR
ME.



THE HELL I
WILL



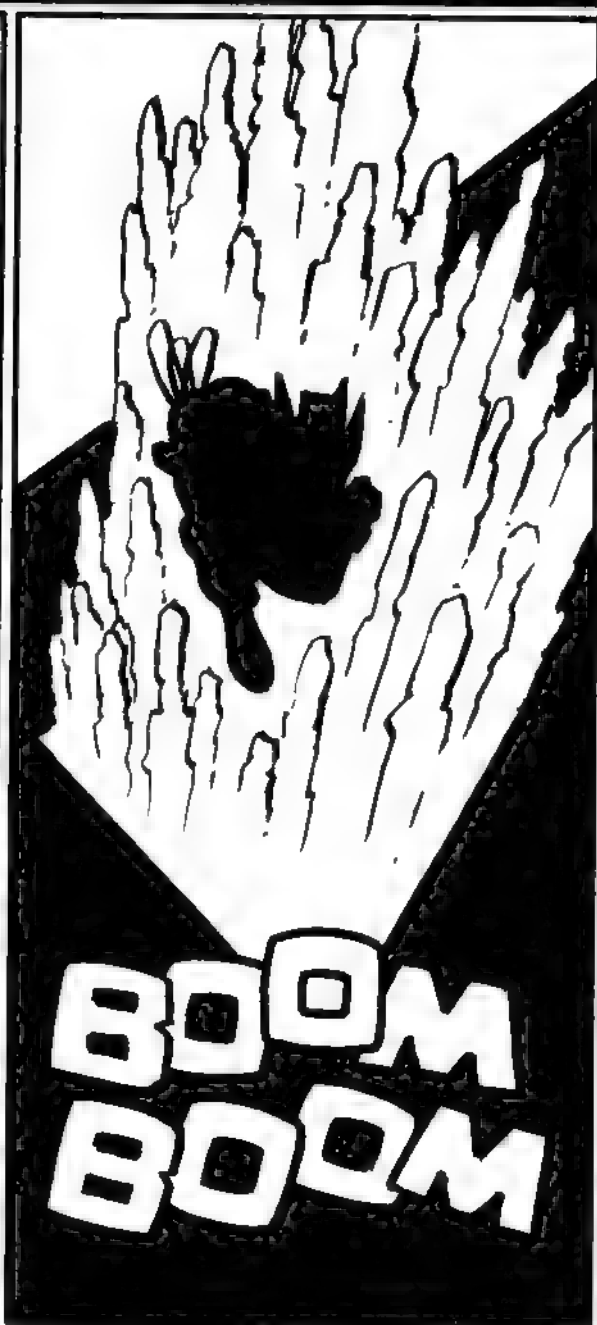
MY LITTLE
SOMETHING.



PLASTIQUE
DETONATED AT
A LARGE STORE
OF FUEL.

THE GIFT
THAT KEEPS
ON GIVING.















OH, CHRIST.
IT'S THEM. THEY
KNOW YOU'RE
HERE.



THEY WANT TO
CUT A DEAL,
ALL RIGHT.

A ROTTEN DEAL.
A DEVIL'S BARGAIN.

I GET *ESTHER*.
THEY GET TO KEEP
THEIR HELLISH
OPERATION GOING.

UNEXPOSED.
UNIMPEDED.



A ROTTEN
DEAL, A
DEVIL'S
BARGAIN.

I TAKE IT.

THE *PICKUP*
IS SET AT AN
OLD *FARM*
AT *NORTH*
CROSS AND
LENNOX.



SPOOKY PLACE. BAD
THINGS HAVE HAP-
PENED HERE.



THE MAN SAID
I'D FIND HER
IN THE BARN.



HI.







I BROUGHT
YOU A COAT,
ESTHER.

THAT'S MY
NAME.
ESTHER.



THEY'RE
GOING TO
CUT MY
FACE.

NO. NOBODY'S GOING TO
CUT YOU. NOBODY'S GOING
TO HURT YOU. YOU'RE SAFE
WITH ME.



THE COAT'S
HEAVY. IT'S
REALLY
HEAVY.

I
KNOW.
I'LL HELP
YOU WALK.
COME
ALONG.



THE COAT'S
REALLY
HEAVY.

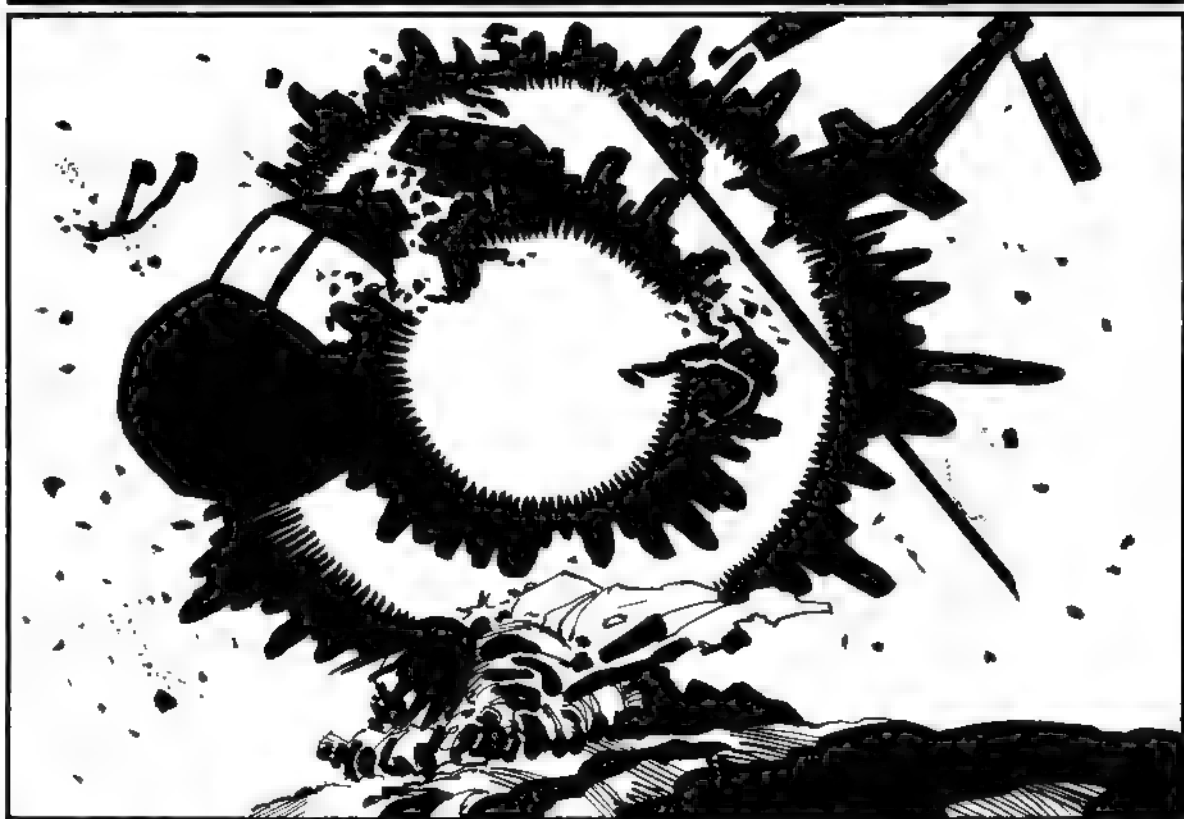
I KNOW. YOU'RE
DOING FINE. JUST
KEEP YOUR HEAD
DOWN.

YOU'RE
DOING FINE.
JUST KEEP
YOUR HEAD
DOWN.

RAKKA



POOM



EVERYTHING
OKAY DOWN THERE,
COMMANDER?



WE'RE FINE,
JERRY. NICE
SHOOTING.

WH--
WHY AREN'T
WE DEAD?



LOVELY STUFF,
KEVLAR.

YOU'RE
SAFE WITH
ME.

EMERGENCY ROOM





YOU SHOULDN'T
HAVE BEAT UP
MY *BOY*.

BLAM



MAKE A
MISSING
PERSON
OUTTA THE
FUCKER.

YES,
SIR CONSIDER
IT DONE.

OUR
HUMAN
RESOURCES
DIVISION IS
A SHAMBLES
HERR WALLEN-
QUIST

GIVE
THE WORD
--AND THE COP
AND THE
SOLDIER
WILL DIE.

NO.

NO
REVENGE.



BUT, SIR--
WE CAN'T
LET THIS
STAND!

WE CAN
AND WE WILL
REVENGE IS A
LOSER'S GAME.
THERE'S NO **PER-**
CENTAGE IN IT
ALL THAT MAT-
TERS IS **PROFIT**
--AND **POWER.**

LIEBOWITZ
WILL RECOVER
FROM HIS PANG
OF **CONSCIENCE**
SOON ENOUGH
HE'LL BE OF
FURTHER **USE**
TO US

AS FOR
WALLACE--
LET THE MAN BE
ON HIS **WAY--**
AND PRAY WE
NEVER SEE
HIS LIKE
AGAIN.



WEEKS
PASS.

JUST A
SECOND!

I'LL BE
JUST A
SECOND!

NO
HURRY

SHE'S
HERSELF
AGAIN.

I'M ALL SET,
"COMMANDER."
THANKS FOR
WAITING.



THAT'S
OKAY

WE'VE
GOT ALL
THE TIME
IN THE
WORLD.



I FINALLY
ASK.

ESTHER
--WHY DID YOU
JUMP?

SHE DOESN'T
ANSWER FOR
THE LONGEST
DAMN TIME.
THEN, HER
VOICE LOW:



I WAS LONELY.



THAT ROTTEN TOWN. THOSE IT CAN'T CORRUPT, IT SOILS.

THOSE IT CAN'T SOIL, IT KILLS.



THAT ROTTEN TOWN. MILES BEHIND US NOW. FADING INTO MEMORY.

A BRIGHT DAY DAWNS.

WE TALK ABOUT ALL SORTS OF THINGS.

THE END

WRITE TO:

BLAM!

c/o DARK HORSE COMICS
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E-mail: dianas@darkhorse.com

Editor's note: The following letter is reproduced here exactly as we received it, all in upper case letters, though the original was hand-printed. Spelling, grammar, and punctuation mistakes have been kept intact.

— Diana

FRANK, FRANK, FRANK,

FIRST OFF, I WANT TO SAY THAT I ENJOY YOUR ARTWORK & STYLE VERY MUCH. I ALSO ENJOY YOUR WRITING. THAT'S BECAUSE I AM OLD ENOUGH. WHICH BRINGS ME TO THE VERY REASON I'AM WRITING THIS LETTER. WHY ARE YOU SO AFRAID OF A VOLUNTARY SYMBOL? YES I AM TALKING ABOUT THE COMICS CODE YOU ARE ALWAYS WHINING ABOUT. PEOPLE CHOOSE TO USE THEIR 1ST AMENDMENT RIGHTS OF FREE SPEECH TO LET CONSUMERS KNOW THAT THEIR COMIC BOOKS ARE SAFE FOR THE YOUNGER GENERATION TO READ AND YOU HAVE A PROBLEM WITH THAT!!! IS THE 1ST AMENDMENT ONLY THERE TO ASSURE IMMATURE LITTLE BABIES LIKE YOU THAT IT IS OK TO PUT FULL FRONTAL NUDITY AND BASICALLY ANYTHING YOU CHOOSE INTO YOUR LITTLE COMIC BOOK AND STILL BE PURCHASED BY ANYBODY NO MATTER HOW OLD THEY ARE? YOU KEEP CRYING ABOUT HOW THE COMICS CODE WILL BRING IN THE CENSOR'S AND REALLY HURT THE INDUSTRY, WELL I'M HERE TO TELL YOU THAT YOU (AND CREATORS' LIKE YOU) WHO CONTINUE TO PUSH THE ENVELOPE ARE THE VERY ONES WHO ARE GOING TO BRING IN THE CENSORS AND ULTIMATELY DESTROY THE INDUSTRY. WHEN YOU GUYS KEEP ON PUSHING A LITTLE FARTHER & FARTHER AND SOMEONE FINALLY STANDS UP AND SAYS ENOUGH IS ENOUGH AND IT IS A LAW THAT YOU CAN'T DO THAT ANYMORE, WHAT ARE YOU GOING TO DO, QUIT? IF YOU ARE GOING TO PUT SOMETHING IN A BOOK THAT WOULD BE DEEMED QUESTIONABLE FOR CHILDREN, THEN BE MAN ENOUGH TO LET SOMEONE KNOW ABOUT. THE COMIC CODE IS A VOLUNTARY SYMBOL BUT I WOULD LOVE TO SEE IT MANDATORY SO YOU WOULD SHUT YOUR BIG MOUTH AND QUIT CRYING. THE REAL REASON THAT' YOU ARE SO PASSIONATE ABOUT THIS

SUBJECT IS STRICTLY MONEY. IF YOU COULDN'T SELL TO THE KIDDIES IT WOULD REALLY HURT YOUR WALLET, WOULDN'T IT? YOU REALLY SHOWED A LOT OF COMPASSION FOR THE KIDS WHO WERE MURDERED AT COLUMBINE ALSO. YOU CLAIM THAT KIDS COULD NEVER BE INFLUENCED BY THE ENTERTAINMENT INDUSTRY (COMICS, MOVIES, VIDEO GAMES) BUT YOU LIST THE FOREFATHERS OF THE COMIC INDUSTRY AS MAJOR INFLUENCES OF YOURS. NOW ISN'T THAT A DOUBLE STANDARD? PEOPLE CAN BE INFLUENCED BY THE CREATOR BUT NOT THE CREATION!!! GROW-UP YOU WORM!!! WHY IS IT THAT EVERYTIME YOU DRAW A MAN, HE HAS TO BE NAKED AND HIS GENITALS COMPLETELY EXPOSED?? IS IT BECAUSE YOU THINK YOU CAN GET AWAY WITH IT OR ARE YOU TRYING TO START SOMETHING? OR IS IT THAT YOU LIKE DRAWING THINGS LIKE THAT? GO ON, KEEP IT UP. PUT MORE PRESSURE ON THE POOR COMIC SHOP WHO WILL TAKE MOST OF THE PRESSURE FOR SELLING STUFF LIKE THIS. OH YEAH AND DON'T FORGET TO WHINE WHEN THEY HAVE TO KEEP IT BEHIND THE COUNTER! YOU CANNOT SIT THERE AND TELL ME THAT THE STORY WOULD BE LESS EFFECTIVE IF YOU PUT SOME TYPE OF CLOTHING ON. YOU CRY BECAUSE YOU THINK THAT PUTTING "LITTLE APOLOGIES" ON A COMIC BOOK WOULD HURT, BUT DO YOU THINK THAT PLAYBOY MAGAZINE'S SALES WENT DOWN WHEN THEY STARTED PUTTING THEM IN BAGS SO THAT THE KIDDIES WOULDN'T GRAB THEM AND LOOK AT THEM WHEN THE STORE OWNERS WEREN'T LOOKING. I THINK NOT!!! YOU ARE AFRAID OF THE COMICS CODE BECAUSE YOU ARE AFTAIID OF WHAT IT WILL DO TO YOUR WALLET!!! PERIOD!!! DON'T YOU THINK IT'S TIME FOR YOU TO GROW UP! YOU ARE QUITE CAPABLE OF PRODUCING GREAT STORIES BUT YOU SEEM MORE INTENT ON PUSHING BUTTONS QUIT CRYING, YOU WORM!

JOHN MICHAEL
UTRECHSVILLE, OH

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Not only did you give us two cool gay characters, but those two beautiful full frontals as well. Miller, you're so fucking cool.

See you next time.

— FM



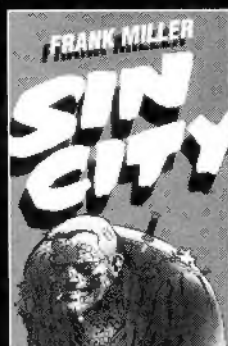
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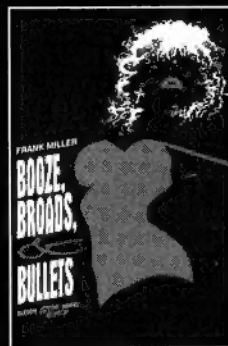
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